

REMARKS

The application is amended to add a new method claim 11 to more clearly define the invention. Applicant's invention claims using a loop to help move the latch from an open position to a closed position and vice versa.

By the Examiner's own admission, George teaches using a loop only to help in the open movement of the latch. George, does not teach using a loop to help in the close movement of the latch but rather teaches away from it. As clearly indicated in Figures 1, 2 and 5, spring bolts H and B are used to help in the close movement. "The bolts can be of any of the usual forms having a spring inclosed [sic] in the casing, to press the point of the bolt out...." George, column 2 lines 77-79.

Similarly, the Examiner concludes that Hudson teaches only using a loop to help in the open movement of the latch. Hudson discloses a spring metal arm C upon the inside of the door operating in an identical manner to George's latch.

Both George and Hudson teach away from using a loop to close a latch, because both use springs rather than the disclosed loops to perform that function. The Examiner acknowledges this in his office action by succinctly stating that both teach of using a loop to help in the *open* movement of the latch. Thus, the method claim 11 is not obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

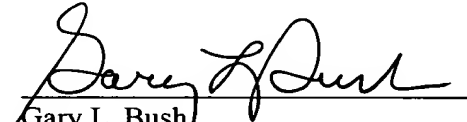
Claims 9 and 10 have been amended to specify that Applicant's loop is directly coupled to the hole of the latch. George and Hudson disclose a loop not directly attached to a latch, but rather indirectly connected to a latch via a tether. These references do not suggest to attach a loop directly to the latch as that would defeat the purpose of the of being able to easily operate the latch. Rather, the references teach of attaching a tether to a latch to allow one to easily operate it. However, attaching a tether to the latch of the present invention

negates the purpose of the invention – to allow handicapped access. Thus, the present invention is not unpatentable over Recchion in view of either George or Hudson.

In summary, claims 9-11 are patentably distinct. Allowance of all claims and passage to issue is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 19, 2003
Andrews & Kurth, L.L.P.
600 Travis, Suite 4200
Houston, Texas 77002
713/220-4726 (office)
713/238-7340 (facsimile)
Customer No. 23,444



Gary L. Bush
Reg. No. 27,423